

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 IGA-01 PM-03 SP-02 L-03 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 ARAE-00 /032 W

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P 072137Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9734

INFO SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

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DEFENSE ALSO FOR DEFENSE MAPPING AGENCY (VADM KRAMER)

EO 11652 NA

TAGS: MASS VE

SUBJ: CODESUR AIRCRAFT

REF: STATE 146508

BEGIN SUMMARY: GOV IS INTERESTED IN PURCHASING OR LEASING UH-1H HELICOPTERS AND HAS ASKED THE US TO ENTER NEGOTIATIONS ON THE DETAILS OF CONTRACT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, IN ORDER TO PERMIT GOV TO REQUEST FUNDS FOR THE AIRCRAFT IN CY 1976 BUDGET. EMBASSY RECOMMENDS POSITIVE RESPONSE TO GOV REQUEST AND HOPES THAT WASHINGTON WILL BE ABLE TO SEND A DOD CASH SALES EXPERT TO CARACAS AT AN EARLY DATE TO ASSIST EMBASSY AND IAGS IN REACHING FINAL AGREEMENT WITH GOV. END SUMMARY.

1. IN RESPONSE TO US OFFER TO LEASE OR SELL UH-1H HELICOPTERS (REFTEL), GOV MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS INFORMED THE AMBASSADOR ON AUG 6 THAT THE GOV WAS STUDYING THESE PROPOSALS BUT COULD NOT MAKE ANY FINAL COMMITMENT UNTIL VENEZUELAN CONGRESS IN DEC APPROVED THE 1976 BUDGET. THE MINITER'S COMMUNICATION WAS FOLLOWED BY A LETTER DATED AUG 7 FROM THE DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL CARTOGRAPHIC OFFICE TO THE IAGS PROJECT DIRECTOR IN VENEZUELA ASKING THAT THE US SEND AN OFFICIAL TO VENEZUELA "AS SOON AS POSSIBLE" IN ORDER TO ARRANGE THE FINAL DETAILS OF "THIS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SALE," TO ENABLE THE CARTOGRAPHIC OFFICE TO INCLUDE THESE FUNDS

IN ITS REQUESTED CY 1976 BUDGET. WHILE THE MINISTER'S LETTER DID NOT STATE WEHTHER THE GOV WOULD PREFER TO PURCHASE OR LEASE THE AIRCRAFT, THE CARTOGRAPHIC OFFICE DIRECTOR'S LETTER AND INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS WITH HIM INDICATE THAT THE GOV WOULD PREFER TO PURCHASE THE HELICOPTERS, IF A SATISFACTORY AGREEMENT CAN BE REACHED, ALTHOUGH HE CONSIDERS OUR ASKING PRICE TOO HIGH IN VIEW OF THE AGE OF THESE 1971 HELICOPTERS. GOV OFFICIALS WILL PROBABLY RESERVE FINAL JUDGEMENT ON SALE OR LEASE UNTIL THEY HAVE HAD FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH US NOT ONLY ON PRICE, BUT ALSO ON SPARE PARTS, SPECIAL TOOLS, ETC.

2. IN THE EMBASSY'S VIEW, WE SHOULD RESPOND PROMPTLY TO THE GOV'S PROPOSAL TO ENTER NEGOTIATIONS AND SHOULD SEND A REPRESENTATIVE HERE ON TDY WHO IS THOROUGHLY FAMILIAR WITH DOD CASH SALES OF HELICOPTERS AND HAS THE AUTHRRORITY TO NEGOTIATE A FINAL ASKING PRICE AND FUTURE SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS. THIS EXPERT COULD ASSIST THE EMBASSY AND IAGS IN REACHING A TENTATIVE AGREEMENT ON A SALE OR LEASE ARRANGEMENT, WHICH THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS COULD THEN INCLUDE IN ITS BUDGET REQUEST FOR CY 1976. SINCE IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THESE DISCUSSIONS WILL BE COMPLETED BY AUG 31, THE EXPIRATION DATE OF THE CURRENT LOAN AGREEMENT, THE EMBASSY ALSO SUGGESTS THAT WE EXTEND THE DATE OF THE PRESENT LOAN TO COVER THE PERIOD OF NEGOTIATIONS, BUT NOT BEYOND DEC 31 THIS YEAR. THE EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE HAVING THE DEPT'S REACTION TO THESE SUGGESTIONS, SO THAT WE MAY RESPOND PROMPTLY TO THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS.

3. WITH RESPECT TO THE U-1A FIXED WING AIRCRAFT, GOV OFFICIALS HAVE INDICATED INFORMALLY THAT THEY ARE NOT INTERESTED IN THE PURCHASE OR LEASE OF THIS PLANE. THEREFORE, THIS AIRCRAFT SHOULD NOT BE INCLUDED IN THE EXTENSION APPROVAL. IAGS IS INITIATING ACTION TO RETURN THIS AIRCRAFT TO THE CANAL ZONE. SHLAUDEMAN

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Message Attributes

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